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REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and clerical errors have been corrected.

In paragraph 2 of the Action, Figs. 6 and 7 were objected to because of the lack of the legend "Prior Art". In view of the objection, the corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) have been filed herewith.

In paragraph 3 of the Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). In view of the objection, corresponding claims have been amended as explained below.

In paragraph 4 of the Action, claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

In paragraph 6 of the Action, claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Admitted Prior Art (APA).

In paragraph 7 of the Action, claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Yasumura et al.* (US 5,458,497).

In view of the rejections, claim 1 has been canceled, and new independent claim 5 has been filed. Claim 3 has been amended to correct clerical errors and dependency. New claims 6 to 10 have been added to obtain the proper scope of the invention.

The applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and request reconsideration. With the amendments, claims 3 and 5 to 10 are not anticipated by APA or *Yasumura et al.* for the reasons explained below.

As recited in amended claim 1, an electrical connector assembly of the invention comprises a first connector and a second connector to be connected to the first connector. The first connector extends in a first direction and has a pair of guide portions at both ends thereof in the first direction. Each of the guide portions has a first inside surface at an inside thereof in the first direction and a first outside surface at an outside thereof in the first direction. The first inside surface has a flat surface, and the first outside surface has a relief recess. The second connector extends in a second direction, and has a pair of guided portions at both ends thereof in the second direction for receiving the guide portions. Each of the guided portions has a second inside surface at an inside thereof in the second direction and a second outside surface at an outside thereof in the second direction. The second inside surface has a relief recess, and the second outside surface has a flat surface.

In particular, in the electrical connector assembly of the invention recited in claim 1, each of the guide portions has the first inside surface with a flat surface and the first outside surface with a relief recess. Further, each of the guided portions has the second inside surface with a relief recess and the second outside surface with a flat surface. With the structure described above, the relief recess can accommodate a part of the guide portions or the guided portions even when the first connector is connected to or disconnected from the second connector in an inclined state. Accordingly, it is possible to smoothly connect and disconnect the connectors without damage and bite.

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In the electrical connector assembly according to Prior Art admitted in the application, the guide portion 58 has the guide surface 59 as a flat surface extending in the plugging direction of the mating connector 70. The guide portion 58 guides the mating connector 70 with the guide surface 59 guiding the guided surface 74 of the mating connector 70 (page 2, line 27 to page 3, line 2 of the specification). Each of the guided portions 73 has the guided surface 74 facing the guide surface 59 closely when the connector 70 is connected to the connector 50 (Figs. 6 and 7) (page 3, lines 24 to 27 of the specification).

As shown in Fig. 7, the guided surface 74 (outside surface) of the guided portion 73 has a flat surface. A surface (inside surface) of the guided portion 73 opposite to the guided surface 74 has a relief recess (the right hand side guided portion). Accordingly, a part of the guide portion 58 (right upper corner) can be accommodated in the relief recess. The guide surface 59 (outside surface) of the guide portion 58 has a flat surface, and a surface (inside surface) opposite to the guide surface 59 has also a flat surface. In other words, both of the inside and outside surfaces of the guide portion 59 have flat surfaces.

In the electrical connector assembly of the invention recited in claim 5, each of the guide portions has the first inside surface with a flat surface and the first outside surface with a relief recess. Further, each of the guided portions has the second inside surface with a relief recess and the second outside surface with a flat surface. With the structure described above, the relief recess can accommodate a part of the guide portions or the guided portions even when the first connector is connected to or disconnected from the second connector in an inclined state. Accordingly, it is possible to

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smoothly connect and disconnect the connectors without damage and bite.

In the electrical connector assembly according to Prior Art admitted in the application, the guided portion 73 has the inside surface with a relief recess and the outside surface with a flat surface. However, the guide portion 59 does not have an outside surface with a relief recess. Both of the inside and outside surfaces of the guide portion 59 have flat surfaces. Accordingly, the structure of the electrical connector assembly according to Prior Art admitted in the application is different from that of the electrical connector assembly of the invention recited in claim 5. Therefore, Admitted Prior Art does not anticipate the invention recited in claim 5.

Yasumura et al. have disclosed a connector assembly. As shown in Fig. 9 in *Yasumura et al.*, the printed circuit board like member 48 is positioned within the longitudinally extending opening 44 in the connector member 32. The printed circuit board like member 48 has the slot 49, so that the alignment block 46 mounted at the end of the opening 44 in the connector member 32 is positioned within the slot 49 in the printed circuit board like member 48 (col. 7, lines 42-54).

As shown in Fig. 9 in *Yasumura et al.*, the printed circuit board like member 48 is rotated by an angle θ relative to the connector member 32 and the alignment block 46. During pivoting or rotational movement of the printed circuit board like member 48 from the position illustrated in FIG. 8 to the position illustrated in FIG. 9, the printed circuit board like member 48 rotates about an axis 76. The axis 76 about which the printed circuit board like member 48 rotates coincides with the center of curvature of the two convex shaped side surface portions 68, 70.

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The shape and configuration of the concave shaped side surface portions 64, 66 and the convex shaped side surface portions 68, 70 allow the printed circuit board like member 48 to freely rotate about the rotation axis 76 without creating torque forces that could break or otherwise damage the alignment block 46 (col. 7, line 55 to col. 8, line 2).

In *Yasumura et al.*, the slot 49 has the two flat surfaces. Further, the alignment block 46 has the two concave surfaces, i.e., the concave shaped side surface portions 64, 66.

In the electrical connector assembly of the invention recited in claim 5, each of the guide portions has the first inside surface with a flat surface and the first outside surface with a relief recess. Further, each of the guided portions has the second inside surface with a relief recess and the second outside surface with a flat surface. In *Yasumura et al.*, the slot 49 has the two flat surfaces, and the alignment block 46 has the two concave surfaces. Accordingly, the structure of the electrical connector assembly in *Yasumura et al.* is different from that of the electrical connector assembly of the invention recited in claim 5. Therefore, *Yasumura et al.* does not anticipate the invention recited in claim 5.

As explained above, APA or *Yasumura et al.* do not disclose or suggest all of the features of the invention recited in claim 3. Therefore, the invention is not anticipated by APA or *Yasumura et al.*

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Kubotera', written over the printed name.

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figs. 6 and 7. In Figs. 6 and 7, previously omitted a legend "Prior Art" has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet